

Abstract of the Disclosure

An out-sourced merchandise return system provides a general store enterprise of the type having a plurality of distributed store locations with an out-source service to offer another plurality of remote merchandisers. The general store enterprise is associated with 5 a processing system that is linked with communication devices of the store locations by a communications medium, and which processes requests for merchandise-return information on merchandise presented to the store locations. The general store enterprise is further associated with a serving device for serving responsive communications to the communication devices of the requesting store locations. These responsive communications 10 include either a positive or negative return decision and, in cases of positive return decisions, further comprise return fulfillment instructions.